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[MYTHS](#)
[ANCIENT PLACES](#)
[ARTIFACTS](#)
[HISTORY](#)
[OPINION](#)
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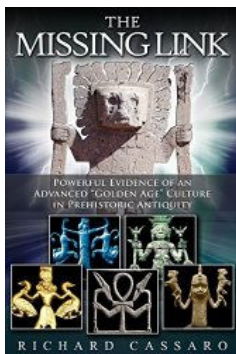
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23 JULY, 2015 - 01:14 LIZLEAFLOOR

4,000-Year-Old Relief Carvings and Decorated Stone Blocks Discovered in Temple of Serapis in Egypt

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Archaeologists in Egypt have discovered two 4,000-year-old reliefs in the Temple of Serapis on the Red Sea. The Egyptian Antiquities Minister Mamdouh Eldamaty announced last week that discoveries also included blocks of stone engraved with a goddess and a bounty of flowers.

A team of Polish archaeologists found the two raised wall carvings in a Temple of Serapis which once belonged to the Ptolemaic Queen Berenice.

According to [The Siasat Daily](#) , the reliefs date to the Middle Kingdom (2050-1750 BC) and the Second Intermediate Period (1650-1550 BC), eras long before the temple's actual construction

date, suggesting they were brought in later.

ZeeNews reports, "The first relief has a cartouche containing the name of the Pharaoh Amenemhat IV - the seventh and next-to-last pharaoh of the 12th Dynasty - whose reign was characterized by exploration expeditions for precious turquoise and amethyst, while the second relief, quite damaged, requires restoration."

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Apis (deity) Amenemhat IV Ptolemaic dynasty Archaeology

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The team of archaeologists at the temple also recovered several stone blocks which were originally bases for statuary. The stones are said to be highly decorated and engraved with lotus and papyrus flowers, a goddess image, and writing in Greek.



Partial titulary of pharaoh Amenemhat IV (end 12th Dynasty) on a relief from the temple of Medinet Maadi, Faiyum. Representational image. ([CC BY-SA 2.0](#))

Serapis was a Greco-Egyptian god and patron of Alexandria who was often depicted as a Greek man dressed in Egyptian clothing; a symbol of unity between Greeks and Egyptians under Ptolemy I in the third century BC. Even his name was a blend of the Egyptian Osiris and the Apis bull (Osiris + Apis = Oserapis/Sarapis). He represented abundance and resurrection.



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Head of Serapis, from a 12-foot statue found off the coast of Alexandria. ([CC BY 3.0](#))

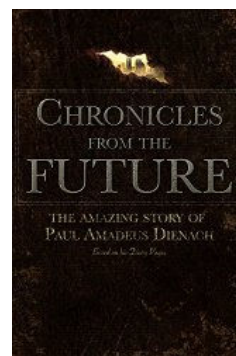
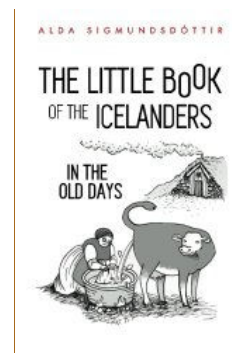
Temples devoted to Serapis were called serapeum, and the cults of Serapis flourished under the Ptolemaic kings who ruled ancient Egypt. The grandest serapeum was said to be in Alexandria.

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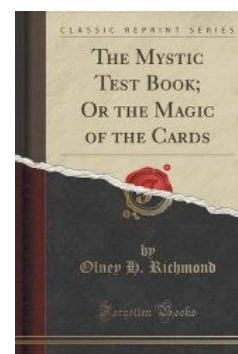


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The remains of the ancient site of the Temple complex of Sarapis at Alexandria. It once included the temple, a library, lecture rooms, and smaller shrines but after many reconstructions and conflict over the site it is mostly ground level ruins. (Iris Fernandez/ CC BY 2.0)

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The establishment of the cult and temples of Serapis were one of many symbols of Ptolemaic legitimization in ancient Egypt. The Pharos of Alexandria was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and the most famous lighthouse in antiquity. The incredible feat of ancient engineering stood at an impressive height of 130 meters (430ft) until it was destroyed by an earthquakes in the 14 th century AD.

Egyptian authorities have this year approved plans to rebuild the towering monument.

Featured Image: Relief carved from stone featuring Ptolemy XIII of Egypt and the deity Isis. Representational image. (CC BY-SA 3.0)

By [Liz Leafloor](#)

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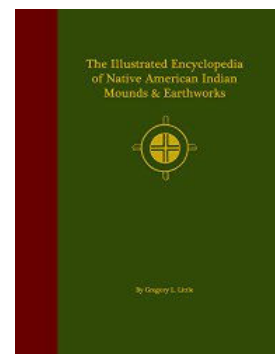
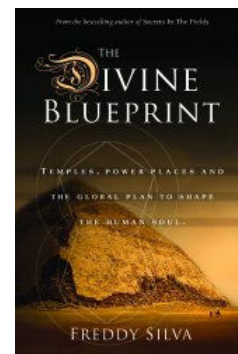


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